

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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DRAFTED BY D:WCHRISTOPHER
APPROVED BY D:WCHRISTOPHER
S/ GMARTIN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DACCA NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 311191

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, SHUM, PINT, KS, PK, BG, ID

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT STATEMENT ON PRISONER RELEASES

THE DEPARTMENT RELEASED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TODAY:

THE STATE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES THE RELEASE TODAY BY
THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT OF ALL BUT ONE OF THE SOCALLED
MYONGDONG PRISONERS AS THE LATEST IN A RECENT SERIES OF
POSITIVE ACTIONS WHICH MEAN THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS
WILL START THE NEW YEAR IN FREEDOM.

2. ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN CHRISTOPHER SAID THAT
THE DEPARTMENT TAKES ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THIS AND RELATED
DEVELOPMENTS AND HOPES THEY PRESAGE A YEAR OF PROGRESS
IN 1978 IN THE ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

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3. THE MYONGDONG PRISONERS WHO WERE RELEASED TODAY IN
KOREA WERE OPPOSITION POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS FIGURES
ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH PROMULGATION OF AN
ANTI-GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO AT MYONGDONG CATHEDRAL IN SEOUL
IN MARCH 1976. FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE KIM DAE-JUNG,
THE ONE MYONGDONG PRISONER NOT RELEASED, HAS BEEN MOVED TO
SEOUL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT.

4. AMONG THE OTHER RECENT ACTIONS WAS THE RELEASE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA OF SOME 10,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS, AS PART OF THAT GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED THREE-YEAR PLAN TO RELEASE THE REMAINING POLITICAL PRISONERS CURRENTLY BEING HELD. THE RELEASES WERE NOTEWORTHY IN THAT PRISONERS WERE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES AND WERE NOT ASSIGNED TO TRANSMIGRATION CENTERS AS ORIGINALLY ANTICIPATED.

5. IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN ALSO ANNOUNCED RECENTLY THE RELEASE OF SOME 11,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS WHO HAD BEEN DETAINED, ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, UNDER THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION.

6. EARLIER THIS MONTH THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH ANNOUNCED THE RELEASE OF 935 POLITICAL PRISONERS.

7. WHILE WELCOMING THESE MOST RECENT PRISONER RELEASES, THE DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION WORLDWIDE, INCLUDING THE PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, REMAINS A MATTER OF DEEP AND CONTINUING CONCERN. THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO URGE, AND TO WORK FOR, IMPROVEMENT IN ALL ASPECTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. CHRISTOPHER

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Subject: DEPARTMENT STATEMENT ON PRISONER RELEASES THE DEPARTMENT RELEASED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TODAY: THE STATE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES THE RELEASE TODAY BY
TAGS: SOPN, SHUM, PINT, KS, PK, BG, ID, STATE
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